

This Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Access and Action Steps to Mitigate Impediments ("AI") is intended to be a thorough analysis of impediments to fair housing in Massachusetts, as well as a resource and a call to action for DHCD and its partners – including subsidizing agencies, non-profit organizations, housing authorities, developers, property managers, lawyers, bankers, advocates, and all residents throughout the commonwealth. The AI is the result of intensive data analysis, contemporary research, and the tremendous efforts of the Fair Housing Advisory Panel, which DHCD convened in 2004 to lend its expertise and recommendations to mitigate impediments to fair housing access. The Panel was augmented and reconvened in 2007 to provide recommendations and insight to help guide the implementation of goals and principles contained within this report. Our collective objective is to address residential segregation and create communities of opportunity, including better schools, more employment, less crime, a healthier environment, and less poverty – in short, diverse communities in which any citizen would want to live, regardless of income and other demographic characteristics. This is an important and lofty goal, and one to which we are fully committed.

However, this is not a goal that can be attained overnight, and it cannot be attained by DHCD acting alone. Our first objective in implementing these action steps is to analyze the Department's resources, noting that we are limited in the resources we can leverage – and leveraging resources will require difficult decisions based upon thorough research. We will schedule regular meetings with program staff on an ongoing basis to determine priorities and to integrate the recommendations into program requirements and the decision-making process. Necessarily, we will identify short-term and long term objectives. Likely short-term objectives will include (but not be limited to) creating a data collection mechanism that can be used by DHCD and other subsidizing agencies to collect and disseminate fair housing data in anticipation of the first report which will be due to the legislature in December 2007, as well as conducting thorough staff training on fair housing research and demographic trends, and fair housing obligations. Nearer term goals will include developing and executing a plan for fair housing community outreach, education and technical assistance for residents of low and moderate income areas with high minority populations, as well more affluent communities of opportunity that remain segregated, and also developing online and print resources for consumers at all levels. Longer term goals include re-evaluating and modifying program requirements so that the Fair Housing Mission Statement and Principles are fully reflected in all programs that DHCD administers, and developing strategic working partnerships at all levels of state government – and in the private and non-profit sectors to identify opportunities to collaborate to ensure that our long term goal to create communities in which any citizen would want to live is effectuated.

With the release of this document, we put our partners on notice – subsidizing agencies, developers, communities, non-profits, real estate professionals, and lenders – that fair housing is of pinnacle importance and will guide our program and policy

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development as we strive to create communities of opportunity. The objectives contained herein will be woven into the fabric of our programs, even as we strive to balance competing interests and deliver high-quality housing and community development opportunities given funding and staffing constraints.